Agreements for supply of potash for the period July, 2009 to March, 2010 have been finalized by different Indian entities for US$ 460 per metric ton CFR India. Russia, Germany, Belarus, Canada, Jordan, Israel, United Kingdom and Spain are the countries which are selling potash in the international market.

**Indigenous production of urea**

3700. SHRI R.C. SINGH: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in view of abundant production of gas in the country, particularly in KG Basin, our country can produce the required quantity of urea to meet the indigenous demand; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SRIKANT JENA): (a) and (b) The total requirement of natural gas for fertilizer sector has been projected at 95.448 MMSCMD by 2011-12, keeping in view the need for natural gas for all the expansion urea projects, revival projects and Greenfield urea plants in the country. It is expected that if sufficient gas as projected above is allocated to fertilizer sector, the country can not only produce the required quantity of urea to meet the indigenous demand but can also become a major exporter of urea in the world. Further, the availability of gas will need to be complemented with scheduled pipeline connectivity to the existing non-gas based urea units including closed urea units in the country.

Currently, the total availability of natural gas for fertilizer sector is 40.388 MMSCMD. Further, it has been decided that the demand emanating beyond 2008-09 from de-bottlenecking of and expansion of fertilizer plants, conversion of naphtha-based and fuel oil-based fertilizer plants, and revival of closed fertilizer plants would be given the highest priority at that stage and will be met from production in subsequent years.

**Subsidy cut on fertilizers**

3701. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is going to cut subsidies on fertilizers which are used by the poor farmers;

(b) if so, the details worked out so far;

(c) how Government will protect the poor people like minorities who are unable to purchase it in the open market on such high rate; and

(d) why Government is failing to provide fertilizers at the rates affordable to the farmers in the current year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SRIKANT JENA): (a) At present, there is no such proposal.

(b) In view of (a) above question does not arise.

(c) and (d) The Fertilizer subsidy is transferred to the farmers in the form of subsidized MRPs which are much lower than the delivered cost of subsidized fertilizers at farm-gate level. Currently, all farmers are getting subsidized fertilizers notified under the subsidy regime at subsidized MRPs.

**Non-payment of outstanding amount to sugarcane farmers**

†3702. SHRI VEER PAL SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the outstanding balance to farmers of Uttar Pradesh on sugar mills;

(b) whether Government is taking any concrete measures to have the payment of sugarcane dues made to farmers; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the time by when the payments would be made?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) As per the fortnightly report for the fortnight ending 15.07.2009, received from the Cane Commissioner, Government of Uttar Pradesh, the outstanding cane price arrears payable by the sugar mills of Uttar Pradesh to the sugar cane farmers for the current sugar season 2008-09 was Rs. 18.19 crore which is just about 0.29 percent of the total cane price payable for the season. Besides, a sum of Rs.11.04 crore is outstanding as arrears for the last sugar season 2007-08 and a total sum of Rs.80.53 crore pertaining to the sugar seasons prior to 2007-08.

(b) and (c) The position of cane price arrears is monitored on fortnightly basis. The Government of Uttar Pradesh has issued recovery certificates to 64 sugar mills for the sugar season 2006-07 and 21 sugar mills in private sector for the sugar season 2007-08. For the current sugar season 2008-09, the process of payment is on. As such, it is not possible to pinpoint the time by which such outstanding payments would be made.

**Conditions for BPL status**

†3703. SHRI SAMAN PATHAK: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether persons satisfying the 13 conditions prescribed by Government for giving BPL status to a family are getting the facilities meant for BPL families;

(b) whether Government is considering to amend the stipulated conditions; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (c) For identification of rural Below

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.